

Transportation Services: Student Badge Program

FAQ

What is the Student Badge Program? Why was it implemented?

HISD Transportation Services is focused on providing students with safe, reliable and timely transportation to and from school each day. As part of that effort, the department is launching a Student Badge Program, to track accurate ridership and ensure safety. This information is essential to improving bus routing, analyzing bus utilization, and providing accurate ridership data to the state.

How does the Student Badge Program work?

Students will receive personalized bus badges that are similar in size to school identification cards. As they get on and off the bus, students must scan the badges on a badge-reading device installed on the bus. The program tracks when and where students get on and off the bus and alerts parents who sign up for the service with real-time notifications via text or email.

When does the Student Badge Program start?

Badge distribution begins in mid-October. However, actual daily badge use and associated student tracking will be rolled out in phases, starting with about 20 campuses launching as a pilot tracking program at the end of October. As the program is refined and potential unforeseen issues are addressed, additional schools will be added. The rollout will continue until all schools are in the program.

How will I know when my school has been added and my student must begin using a badge?

Parents and students will be notified in advance through HISD's SchoolMessenger notification system when their school is being added to the program.

How and when will bus badges be distributed?

Badges will be distributed directly to students by school officials at the campus level during the second half of October.

What information will be listed on the student badges?

Each bus badge will list the student's name and badge identification number as well as the school and school identification number. Bus badges will not replace the student identification badge issued by your student's school.

Will a bus badge holder be provided?

Yes. Each identification badge will come with a plastic sleeve and lanyard. Students will be able to wear the badge around their necks or attach it to their backpacks.

What if I don't get a badge?

Badges will be provided to all students who are eligible for transportation. If you do not receive a badge, contact Customer Care at 713-556-9400. They will open a ticket for you and process your request. Please remember: Student will not be prevented from riding the bus if they don't have a badge. They still will be provided transportation to and from school.

Are badges required for special education routes?

Badges for special education routes are not currently required. They will be added in during a later phase.

How will students be trained on using the badges?

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Bus badge use is quick and easy — just scan and go. No activation is needed. However, a 30-second instructional video is available on the district's Transportation Services website: www.houstonisd.org/transportation.

What if the card gets lost or stolen? Do I have to buy a new one?

The initial bus badge will be issued to students for free. However, students must purchase any replacement cards. Replacement cards can be ordered online at www.houstonisd.org/transportation. The replacement cost is \$5 and goes to cover the new badge, sleeve, and lanyard.

What if my students forget their badges? Will they be refused transportation?

No students will be refused transportation because they forgot their badge. However, parents only receive alerts when students scan their badges.

How can I sign up for real-time notifications about my student?

Once your student has been issued a badge, go to www.zpassplus.com, click on the "Sign Up Today" button, and follow the online prompts to create and activate your account. You can select text or email alerts. Remember: Your students must have a badge before you create your account, as the student's name and badge number are required to set up an account.

Can the Student Badge Program be used to track the bus along its route?

No. The Student Badge Program will alert parents when and where their students get on and off the bus.

Will students be required to scan their bus badge on field trips or for athletic events?

No. Students who are on field trips or attending athletic events will not have to scan bus badges, as not all HISD students will have a bus badge. Badges are only issued to HISD students who are eligible for transportation and will only need to be scanned during the ride to and from school.